

## ABSTRACT

A pipeline accelerator includes a bus and a plurality of pipeline units, each unit coupled to the bus and including at least one respective hardwired-pipeline circuit. By including a plurality of pipeline units in the pipeline accelerator, one can increase the 5 accelerator's data-processing performance as compared to a single-pipeline-unit accelerator. Furthermore, by designing the pipeline units so that they communicate via a common bus, one can alter the number of pipeline units, and thus alter the configuration and functionality of the accelerator, by merely coupling or uncoupling pipeline units to or from the bus. This eliminates the need to design or redesign the 10 pipeline-unit interfaces each time one alters one of the pipeline units or alters the number of pipeline units within the accelerator.